

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 /073 W
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R 181132Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3403
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2651

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, LA

SUBJECT: DISSOLUTION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REFS: A) FBIS BANGKOK 161346Z APRIL 75

B) FBIS BANGKOK 160523Z APRIL 75

BEGIN SUMMARY: KING SIGNED DECREE ON APRIL 13 DISSOLVING
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND CALLING FOR ELECTIONS IN 90 DAYS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 33 OF CONSTITUTION. THIS ACTION
IS GENERALLY INTERPRETED AS ANOTHER PATHET LAO VICTORY
FOR ALTHOUGH KING SCORED A CONSTITUTIONAL POINT BY INCLUDING
REFERENCE TO ARTICLE 33, LIKELIHOOD OF GENERAL ELECTION
UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES APPEARS REMOTE. END SUMMARY

1. THE SEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS NOW BEEN ABOLISHED
BY ROYAL DECREE SIGNED APRIL 13, BUT ALMOST EVERYTHING ELSE
ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE LEGISLATIVE POWER REMAINS MURKY.

2. OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECREE, PUBLISHED
APRIL 17, REFERS ONLY TO DISSOLUTION. HOWEVER, MINISTER
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OF JUSTICE TOLD CHARGE IN LUANG PRABANG THAT DECREE ALSO

REFERS TO ARTICLE 33 OF THE CONSTITUTION, WHICH CALLS
FOR NEW ELECTIONS WITHIN 90 DAYS.

3. HOWEVER, THERE HAS AS YET BEEN NO DISCUSSION WITHIN
PGNU OF POSSIBLE MEANS OF MEETING THE 90-DAY REQUIREMENT.
(NEITHER CABINET NOR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MET THIS WEEK.)
PRIME MINISTER'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE TO THE NATION (REF
A) INCLUDES STATEMENT THAT DISSOLUTION IS IMPORTANT
BECAUSE IT WILL "EVENTUALLY ALLOW THE LAO PEOPLE ON THE
TWO SIDES" TO ELECT A NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY "IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE CONSTITUTION AND WITH THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE TWO
SIDES," BUT MAKES NO MENTION OF TIMING.

4.COMMENT:THE REFERENCE TO ARTICLE 33 APPEARS TO
CONSTITUTE A VICTORY OF FORM FOR THE KING, WHO WANTED
CONSTITUTION RESPECTED. HOWEVER, THERE IS SO FAR NO
INDICATION THAT PGNU WILL SERIOUSLY ATTEMPT TO MEET
THE 90-DAY TIME LIMIT FOR ELECTIONS REQUIRED BY
THE ARTICLE. NEITHER SIDE HAS GIVEN ANY EVIDENCE OF
WANTING THEM NOW. FURTHERMORE, THE VIENTIANE AGREEMENT
AND PROTOCOL CALL FOR NEW ELECTION PROCEDURES WHICH
HAVE NOT YET EVEN BEEN DISCUSSED.

5. IN ALL OTHER RESPECTS, THE DISSOLUTION REPRESENTS A
VICTORY FOR THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT AND IS BEING ACCLAIMED
AS SUCH (REF B). THE LPF HAS ACTIVELY SOUGHT UNCONDI-
TIONAL DISSOLUTION FOR A YEAR AND NOW IN EFFECT HAS
OBTAINED IT.

6. AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, THE KING'S ACTION WILL
DEEPEN GLOOM OF VIENTIANE SIDE; A DAO OFFICER REPORTS
HAVING HEARD FOR FIRST TIME EVER FROM FAR OFFICERS
STRONG CONDEMNATION OF THE KING FOR YIELDING TO THE PL
POSITION ON THE ASSEMBLY ISSUE.
CHAPMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COALITION GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL STABILITY, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975VIENTI02651
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750137-0038
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750435/aaaabheo.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 FBIS BANGKOK 161346Z, 75 APRIL 75
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISSOLUTION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, LA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006